



Los Angeles County
Mental Health Wellness Magazine

Minds & Matters

WINTER 2013

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LACDMH CELEBRATES FIVE YEARS OF MHSA HOUSING

Author of the Mental Health Services Act (MHSA) and California State Senate President pro Tem Darrell Steinberg was on hand to see his work in action at the five-year celebration of the MHSA Housing Program at the Villas at Gower on Friday, November 9, 2012. In addition to state and local dignitaries, many public and private partners attended the celebration sponsored by LACMDH and brought illustrated renderings of MHSA-funded housing projects.

Co-sponsored by the Supportive Housing, Alliance, the event recognized the collaborative partnerships that made the 33 current housing projects partially funded by the MHSA Housing Program, a reality. MHSA has made housing possible for thousands of formerly homeless persons with a diagnosis of mental illness, including Transitional Age Youth (TAY) and older adults. A total of 746 units have been completed or are in the process of completion that offer beautiful, safe and affordable permanent supportive housing with on and off-site mental health services to provide the supports necessary to help formerly homeless individuals and families live successfully in the community.

"Nothing has been more important in my career than the passage of MHSA," Darrell Steinberg stated. "It's time to treat people with dignity and provide support for them to live in the community."

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Minds & Matters

From Marvin J. Southard, D.S.W., Director
Los Angeles County Department of Mental Health



Wrestling with Our Angels

I recently had the pleasure of listening to a rabbi explain the story from the book of Genesis in which Jacob wrestled with an angel. This was a pivotal moment in Jacob's life because he wrestled with an adversary who was clearly stronger than he was. Yet despite the difficulty and pain, he did not give up. Jacob struggled with the angel through the whole night and eventually prevailed because he just would not let go. In the process, he received a wound, but also a blessing; and through the blessing, a new and remarkable identity.

I think there is an obvious application of this story to the lives of our clients and their families. Sometimes the forces of mental illness and addiction and all of the burdens associated with those illnesses can seem to be an overwhelming adversary. But for those of our clients who continue to struggle all through the long night, the reward may be a new identity, though one with wounds and scars, that is dedicated to service and helping others. Our job is to help them as they wrestle in whatever ways we can.

But maybe there is also an organizational application of this story for mental health and addiction treatment entities like LACDMH and its providers. As we enter the arena and try to imagine how our services and the gifts we have to offer will be successfully integrated into the larger health care world, there will be struggles. But if we enter into those struggles, confident as Jacob was about who he was, then we may emerge like he did with a new identity and powerful destiny.

Finally, the story has personal implications. Each of us, and our families, has struggles and challenges to face. During this time of the year, may we begin to find the way to turn these challenges – whatever they are – into a blessing. May we, like Jacob, prevail as we wrestle with our angels.

Marvin J. Southard, D.S.W.

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recovery



Employee Recognition

Retired

September 2012

Helen Weasel, 21 yrs
Bonnie Huettner, 40 yrs
Erwin Cross, Jr., 37 yrs
Juana Gonzalez, 12 yrs
James Moffitt, Sr., 35 yrs
Susan Baltimore, 32 yrs
Malvina Brown, 40 yrs
Lanna Karapetyan, 14 yrs
Fernando Escarcega, 40 yrs

October 2012

Patricia Claybrook, 13 yrs
Soon Chung, 30 yrs
Carol Bullard, 32 yrs
Karen R. Corey, 14 yrs
Jere Alhadeff, 13 yrs

November 2012

Ahuva Braverman, 18 yrs
Irwin Jacobs, 8 yrs
Bill Berwald, 12 yrs
Patricia Berger, 21 yrs
Elizabeth Castillo, 11 yrs
Elaine Figueroa, 10 yrs

December 2012

Khang Nguyen, 22 yrs
Tomas Torres, 13 yrs
Norma Aguilar, 7 yrs
Kathleen Daly, 16 yrs
Gloria Dawson, 38 yrs



LACDMH CONGRATULATES 2012 EMPLOYEES OF THE YEAR

On Thursday, October 18, 2012, the Los Angeles County Department of Mental Health (LACDMH) HONORS Committee celebrated the department's 2012 Employees of the Year at the California Endowment in downtown Los Angeles. This year, there were six individual award winners along with a team.

The LACDMH Employees of the Year program is designed so employees can honor their extraordinary colleagues. During this year's nominating process, 120 employees took the time to nominate more than 300 fellow workers. Comprised of a diverse group of employee peers, the HONORS Committee reviewed all the nominations and scored them based on the criteria aligned with LACDMH's mission and values.

"This is one of those days we honor those who make contributions to making the lives of others better," said LACDMH Director Marvin Southard, D.S.W.

This year's surprise Hero Award was given at the end of the ceremony to LACDMH Deputy Director, Tony Beliz, Ph.D., for all his contributions to the department and for his work with the Emergency Outreach Bureau. "There isn't a day I wake up that I'm not excited to see what there is to do that day," Dr. Beliz told the audience. "I want to thank all of you and thank the staff for making this happen."

LACDMH's Employees of the Year for 2012 are:

Promotion of Wellness & Recovery:

Irma Vallejos, Community Worker, Northeast Wellness Center

Dedicated Support Services:

Jae Kim, L.C.S.W., Psychiatric Social Worker II, Older Adult System of Care

Elbiss Gerigourian, Staff Assistant II, Child Welfare Division, Children's System of Care

Dedicated Direct Services:

David Loaiza, Substance Abuse Counselor, Edelman Westside Mental Health Center and Wellness Center

Leadership:

Angel Rendon, M.D., Mental Health Psychiatrist, Roybal Family Mental Health Center

Career Achievement:

Sandra D. Thomas, L.C.S.W., Deputy Director, Transition Age Youth System of Care Bureau

Outstanding Team Work:

Partners in Suicide Prevention Team (Aileen Montoya/Older Adults System of Care, Anne Choe/Adult System of Care, Deborah Bielecki/Adult System of Care, Jae Kim/Older Adults System of Care, Martha Alamillo/Children's System of Care, Nelly Arias/Children's System of Care, Tasha McFashion-Stiger/Transition Age Youth System of Care, Terica Roberts/Transition Age Youth System of Care, Wilfred Paltanwala/Adult System of Care and William Barreto/Children's System of Care).

Hero Award:

Tony Beliz, Ph.D., Deputy Director, Emergency Outreach Bureau



LACDMH WINS COUNTY QUALITY AND PRODUCTIVITY AWARDS

BY KAREN ZARSADIAZ-IGE, PUBLIC INFORMATION OFFICER II

On Wednesday, October 17, 2012, the Los Angeles County Department of Mental Health (LACDMH) received recognition from the Quality and Productivity Commission (QPC) for several projects that enhanced employee productivity and improved the quality of services provided to the public. The QPC handed out awards to LACDMH and many other Los Angeles County departments for its effective and efficient programs at the QPC's 26th annual Productivity and Quality Awards luncheon, "Investing in a Quality Future", at the Dorothy Chandler Pavilion in downtown Los Angeles. "For me, the most important part of this (the awards ceremony) is that we recognize the people who do the job," said William T Fujioka, Chief Executive Officer for Los Angeles County.

LACDMH received several awards for its programs and projects which were either LACDMH-led or collaborative efforts. "I think these awards demonstrate the Department of Mental Health's commitment to collaboration with all the county's departments for the good of the residents of Los Angeles County. I'm so proud that we could contribute to this," stated LACDMH Director, Marvin Southard, D.S.W.

LACDMH took the lead in the following projects which received honors:

Top Ten Award

LACDMH led the LAC+USC Medical Center Street to Home Project in collaboration with the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors First District, Chief Executive Office, Department of Health Services, Department of Public Health, Department of Public Social Services, Office of County Counsel and Sheriff's Department. The project provides outreach, engagement and eventual placement in permanent supportive housing for chronically homeless and vulnerable individuals who are living on and near the campus of the LAC+USC Medical Center. The project has managed to redirect 40 homeless individuals to Exodus Urgent Care Center for integrated treatment of physical health, mental health and substance use issues as well as linked them to ongoing primary and mental health care.

Mega Million Dollar Award

The *Mental Health Services Act Housing Program* led this effort with the Community Development Commission/Housing Authority for the Mega Million Dollar Award. The award is given to the top program that reported the most cost savings, cost avoidance and/or revenue generated. The Housing Program strategically leveraged local, state and federal funding to maximize LACDMH's investment of \$115 million in Mental Health Services Act funding into a \$551 million pool for the development of permanent supportive housing (PSH). Working with County management and stakeholders, 21 private housing developers are involved with building 33 new PSH projects that will create apartments for clients and their families.

LACDMH also received recognition for its involvement in the following projects:

Top Ten Award

Bronze Eagle Award Winner. *Contractor Alert Reporting Database*/Office of Auditor-Controller with Office of County Counsel, Internal Services Department, Chief Executive Office, Department of Public Social Services, Department of Children and Family Services, Department of Health Services, Department of Mental Health and Department of Public Health.

Enhancements to the GR SSIMAP Advocacy Program/Department of Public Social Services with Department of Health Services, Department of Mental Health and Sheriff's Department.

Performance Measurement Award

Coordinated Services Action Teams/Department of Children and Family Services with Department of Mental Health.

Traditional Plaque Winner

Developmentally Disabled Youth Program (DDYP)/Probation Department with Department of Health Services, Department of Mental Health and Los Angeles Superior Court.

In Their Own Words



YOUNG BURLINGTON LAUNCHES TAY ON THE ROAD TO HOPE, WELLNESS AND RECOVERY

BY KATHLEEN PICHÉ, PUBLIC AFFAIRS DIRECTOR

On October 18, 2012, LACDMH celebrated the launch of the Young Burlington housing project, hosted by Women Organizing Resources, Knowledge and Services (WORKS). Young Burlington was created specifically for Transition Age Youth (TAY) (aged 18-25) who are formerly homeless and have mental health issues. The development features 21 multi-family, environmentally friendly one-bedroom units dedicated to providing permanent supportive housing for TAY.

The morning program featured speakers from WORKS, LACDMH, local dignitaries and the residents themselves. Deputy Director Tony Beliz, Ph.D., spoke on behalf of LACDMH, encouraging the residents to persevere on their road to hope, wellness and recovery.

A three-story mural entitled "Totem," designed by internationally acclaimed artist, Synthia Saint James, is featured in the courtyard. Saint James and the residents sold homemade artworks, donating a percentage of the sales to Young Burlington. The courtyard also contains multiple planters where resident-maintained fruit trees and vegetables help TAY eat well.

Resident artist Courtney, a 22 year-old youth from West Palm Beach Florida, has lived at Young Burlington since last December. Courtney was diagnosed with bipolar disorder as a teen. Her schoolmates made fun of her and beat her up because of her sexual preference. Her parents did not understand the disease or what was happening with Courtney's behavior. Her father threw her out of the house when she turned 18.

Courtney was homeless for two years until someone lured her to Los Angeles, promising a job. That turned out to be a scam and she spent another two years on the street, where she was sexually abused and depressed. She found Pacific Clinics and, after several months, was placed at Young Burlington. Courtney is happy to finally have her own place. She is dealing with her depression and has learned to "stop being negative." She now wants to go to school and be an artist.

LACDMH WALKS FOR NAMI

Teams representing the Los Angeles County Department of Mental Health (LACDMH) woke up bright and early on Saturday, October 6, 2012, to participate in the National Alliance on Mental Illness's (NAMI) annual 5K NAMIWalks event in Santa Monica at the Third Street Promenade. LACDMH was a presenting sponsor in this year's walk.

"This year's NAMIWalks event has been fantastic! I think we've raised awareness, broadened our base and have been very inclusive – and that's why this year's walk is so big," said NAMI walk manager Wayne Baldaro. "I'm very excited and I know next year will be bigger and better."

According to Baldaro, nearly 3,000 people joined the tenth annual NAMI event aimed at ending stigma and supporting NAMI programs in Los Angeles County. The 5K fundraiser, "NAMIWalks: Changing Minds One Step at a Time", helps support programs of education, research and advocacy for those who suffer from all types of mental illness, including schizophrenia, bipolar disorder, major depression, obsessive compulsive disorder and severe anxiety disorders.

Last year, NAMIWalks were held in 80 cities all over the country. Since NAMIWalks began in 2003, there have been more than 450 NAMIWalks events with 500,000 walkers/supporters who've raised more than \$45 million.

Besides LACDMH, numerous other sponsors participated, including Cedars-Sinai Medical Center, Genentech, Northrop Grumman, Downtown Santa Monica, Landmark Medical Center, Sunovion and Teva Pharmaceuticals USA.

LACDMH HOSTS AMERICAN INDIAN ALASKA NATIVE MENTAL HEALTH CONFERENCE

The Los Angeles County Department of Mental Health (LACDMH) Under Represented Ethnic Population (UREP) team organized the American Indian/Alaska Native (AI/AN) Mental Health Conference 2012. This year's event was held on Tuesday, November 6th at the California Endowment in downtown Los Angeles. The conference theme was "Weaving Wellness into Our Spirits".

Funded by the Mental Health Services Act (MHSA), the conference was an opportunity to learn about the mental health needs of American Indian/Alaska Natives. In particular, for the AI/AN community, the integration of traditional healing services (e.g. powwows, traditional dancing, tribal drumming, etc.) into treatment has had a positive effect on the mental health treatment outcomes for consumers.

"I think this conference has shown that the vision is in place... We can't pull out the mental health piece of integrated services. We have to look at the whole person," said Ana Suarez, LACDMH District Chief Service Area 7, American Indian Counseling Center.

At the conference, various presenters gave information focused on the AI/AN community and its needs. Workshops were held by researchers, clinicians, traditional healers and consumers, including "The Uses of Drumming and Spirituality for Indigenous People in Recovery" (Daniel Dickerson, D.O., M.P.H., Inupiaq and Benjamin Hale, Navajo), "Cultural Competence with American Indians/Alaska Natives in the Mental Health Setting" (Melanie J. Cain, Ph.D., Santa Clara Pueblo and Jicarilla Apache tribes and Erica Charley, B.A., Hualapai from Red Mesa and Navajo), "Tradition of Fatherhood: Prevention and Early Intervention for Substance Abuse in Our Families" (Peter John Cano III, B.A., Coastal Band of the Chumash Nation) and "Weaving Wellness into Our Spirits: Panel Discussion" (Facilitated by Carrie Johnson, Ph.D., Dakota Sioux).

The day started with the Friends of American Indian Changing Spirits Drumming Group. Chief Anthony Morales, Tribal Chairperson from the Gabrieleno/Tongva Tribal Council of San Gabriel gave the opening blessing with opening remarks from Daniel Dickerson, Melanie Cain, and Larry Gasco, Ph.D. (Los Angeles County Mental Health Commission and Vice Chairman of the Coastal Band of the Chumash Nation). Los Angeles County Supervisor Don Knabe, Fourth District, also addressed the crowd by video.

During the lunch break, Benjamin Hale gave a blessing while the Kaweah Bird Singers provided entertainment. Speakers during the day included Rita Ledesma, Ph.D., L.C.S.W., a professor at the California State University of Los Angeles, and the founder and president of White Bison, Inc., Don Coyhis from the Mohican Nation. John Funmaker of the Ho-Chunk Council provided the final blessing while District Chief Ana Suarez closed the conference.

hope wellness recovery

LACDMH Mission

Enriching lives through partnerships designed to strengthen the community's capacity to support recovery and resiliency.

Our Values

Integrity: We conduct ourselves professionally according to the highest ethical standards.

Respect: We recognize the uniqueness of every individual and treat all people in a way that affirms their personal worth and dignity.

Accountability: We take responsibility for our choices and their outcomes.

Collaboration: We work together toward common goals by partnering with the whole community, sharing knowledge, building strong consensus, and sharing decision-making.

Dedication: We will do whatever it takes to improve the lives of our clients and communities.

Transparency: We openly convey our ideas, decisions and outcomes to ensure trust in our organization.

Quality and Excellence: We identify the highest personal, organizational, professional and clinical standards and commit ourselves to achieving those standards by continually improving every aspect of our performance.



Los Angeles County
Department of Mental Health
is dedicated to partnering with
clients, families and communities
to create hope, wellness and recovery.



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A Final Thought



ACHIEVING YOUR GOALS

BY KATHLEEN PICHÉ, L.C.S.W., PUBLIC AFFAIRS DIRECTOR

As 2012 fades to black and 2013 becomes a reality, we turn our thoughts to New Year's resolutions and ways of making our lives a little happier and healthier. Usually, we aren't focused on day-to-day goals this time of year, but focus on greater, life changing plans. After researching ways of reaching goals, I'd like to repeat five good ideas from Dr. Philip Humbert, author, speaker and personal success coach.

Tips for achieving what you desire:

1. **Believe in yourself.** The need to believe in oneself is essential to achieving anything in life. If you plan on beginning something new, such as a new business, you need to be in love with that type of work, and you must know (realistically) how the operation can be successful. You also need to believe in the fact it can work. Use of affirmations, such as I will lose 20 pounds instead of I will try to lose 20 pounds, can help here.
2. **Think out the process to achieve your goals.** What specific steps do you need to take to reach your ultimate goal? Planning ahead is important, especially when you are trying to reach a complicated goal. Visualize each of the steps needed to reach your goal. See yourself doing these steps, living each instant of them. Seeing yourself accomplishing activities toward your goal is an easy way to plan ahead, and helps to identify the steps necessary to reach that goal. When the time arrives and you are living those steps, you will probably get a "déjà vu" feeling because you have already seen yourself doing it. If your goal is to write a book, start writing everyday (specify how many pages) and figure out how much writing you need to do to produce one chapter a week.
3. **Visualize steps to take before you go to bed.** This will plant your ideas into your subconscious and allow you to dream about it. When you sleep, your brain doesn't know the difference between reality and fiction. This explains why your dreams can feel so true. It also explains why a nightmare can feel so real.
4. **Strive, fight and stay positive.** Your goals will take time to manifest, they also won't happen without hard work. You may have to overcome many obstacles before you reach your desired goal. There are always people who will work against you (yourself included) or technical hurdles you will need to overcome. NEVER discourage yourself, always stay positive and focus on becoming a problem solver. Keep pushing even when you think everything is lost. No one has ever achieved anything without failures or setbacks, so stay positive.
5. **Get others to back you up, use your contacts and talk to people.** Don't be shy about talking to others about your goals and how you plan to achieve them. You can benefit from others by learning about their past experience and success. Insight from others in learning about their experiences can be important in solving your problems and may help you to skip a few steps. This can be true on tangible goals like setting up a business, going back to school or building a shed in the backyard. Getting help is not only smart and can speed up your process, it will also show your friends and family that you want to learn from them and you are serious about achieving your goals.

It is important to use common sense in goal setting. Almost anything is possible but some goals may not be realistic. If you set your goals too high, you will be disappointed if you can't reach them appropriately, so make your goals attainable. Also, do some soul searching and make sure the goals you set for yourself are really what you want, deep down inside.